

Dreams

by HufflepuffFinder98

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Summary: Nineteen years after graduation, Angela finds herself back in her home town for her sister's wedding. Now a single mom raising a young son, Angela is surprised to reconnect with an old high school friend. But when a former flame enters the picture, will love be enough?

1. Chapter 1

July 20, 2016

"Oh, look at this tiling, Thomas!" Rickie enthused to his husband as they walked through the ornate hotel.

"I know!" Replied Thomas, a large smile on his face as he stared at Grand Staircase. "I did so well."

Rickie laughed as he turned to Angela. "So confident in his own designs. I love it."

Angela smiled at her old friend and a touch of playfulness came into her tone. "You both haven't changed at all."

Looking down at the two children holding hands with Thomas and Rickie. "Can't say the same for these two." she grinned at her honorary niece and nephew, Beatrice and Jeff. "You both have gotten so big!"

Both twins smiled at Angela, showing her their trademark glowing smiles.

"Auntie Angela, can we go swimming after we check in with Jack?"

"If it's okay with your daddies, Jack will take you to the pool."

"Where is Jack?" Asked Rickie and Angela turned her head, looking for

her son. She tried to hide her grin when she saw him looking at a picture of Paul McCartney twenty feet away.

"He really loves the Beatles, doesn't he?" Laughed Thomas. "You Americans love your rock stars."

"Yes, yes we do." Replied Rickie. He saw a blonde haired man at the check in desk next to theirs. "Brian!"

"Here you go, Mr. Krakow." The smiling concierge handed him the keys. "Enjoy your stay!"

"Oh, hey Rickie." Said Brian, pulling his friend into a hug. "Haven't seen you forever."

"You remember Angela, right?" Said Rickie, motioning to his friend. "Angela Chase?"

Brian and Angela made eye contact awkwardly before shaking hands. Brian knew he was going to see her again, given the occasion but he realized no matter how hard he tried to tell himself he had forgotten her, seeing her was a strange sensation that he didn't know how he felt about it.

"Hi, Brian." Said Angela, smiling slightly awkwardly. She hadn't known her sister had invited Brian, even though she knew Danielle was fond of him."

There was a few months of tense silence before Jack came to the checkout counter. "Hey, the twins want me to take them swimming after this. They also want to eat lunch."

Thomas looked at his children knowingly. "Did Jack offer to buy you lunch?"

"Yeah, I did." Confirmed Jack "There's a McDonald's down the street. We can walk there."

"Do you have your phone on you?" Asked Angela "Your wallet?"

"Of course I do mom. I got everything. I'll be back before Aunt Danielle's party."

Angela smiled at her son. "See you at 4."

Jack took Beatrice's and Jeff's hands and the three walked out one of the hotel's double doors.

"C'mon, let's get settled in." Said Rickie. "It's great to see both of you again. Tell me Brian, what is it that you've been doing lately."

Brian found himself feeling awkward in front of Angela.

"I work at Google now. I got promoted a few months ago, actually."

"That's great, Brian." Said Angela, sincerely. "What else are you currently doing?"

"I just sold my apartment in Washington DC. I'm moving to Manhattan for work in a few weeks. What have you been doing?"

"I'm living in the upper west side now, actually. I work as a freelance writer."

"Danielle never mentioned you had a son. Congratulations."

"Thank you. Speaking of Danielle, I have to go help set up for the party. See you in a hour."

Angela put her suitcase on a luggage cart and pushed it to one of the elevators. Even after she had left the lobby, Brian could still feel his heart beating quickly.

"You really missed her, didn't you Brian?" Asked Thomas gently.

Brian didn't deny it. "I really did."

"Even after you met Leah?"

Brian took a deep breath. "Even then." he admitted.

"I haven't seen in her in nearly twenty years and she can still do that. It's ridiculous."

"It's how you felt when you last saw her, you told us."

"It's not 1997 anymore. What happened between us is in the past."

Brian looked sadly at Rickie and Thomas. "I'm going to put my things away and get a drink.

Brian didn't even grab a cart, instead walking to the elevator holding his duffel bag, a frown forming on his face as the doors closed.

"We should put our bags in the room and get ready for the party." Said Thomas

"Yeah, we should." Agreed Ricky

The two caught an elevator to their room on the 19th floor, both silently thinking of their friends.

2. Chapter 2

Brian found himself at the bar thirty minutes later, having unpacked his bags. He was only staying in the hotel for four days, yet he had unpacked everything and put them in the vanity drawers of his room.

He held the Jack and Coke in his hands tightly, before taking a gulp. He knew he shouldn't be drinking but he chugged it anyways, trying to forget the anxiety and depression that had come to him over the last hour.

Everything had changed so much since he'd returned to the small town of Liberty, just half an hour outside of Pittsburgh. As he had driven to the hotel, he was shocked to see all that had happened since he had left to go to university.

There were new subdivisions everywhere, the modern styles in sharp contrast to the houses built in the 1960's. There was a new strip mall three blocks from his childhood home, the quiet, grassy area filled with trees had been paved over and a Burger King and CVS had taken its place. He had driven past the kids restaurant where he had his 7th birthday party and was saddened to see a new grocery store where it had once been.

His 7th birthday had been the best he'd ever had. He still remembered how his birthday cake was vanilla with red frosting and with seven blue and white candles on top. He remembered a man dressed as a panda bear singing Happy Birthday to him and playing in the ball pit.

He remembered after he had blown out his candles, Angela and Sharon both squeezed him a hug and he had never felt more loved than when they were both holding him.

He told a deep breath and finished the last of his drink, telling the bartender to put it on his hotel bill.

He took the elevator to his hotel room and when he reached his room, pulled the duvet over his body.

Why does everything in my life come back to her? Brian thought as he brushed one of his blonde ringlets out of his face. Somehow, it just all relates back to Angela.

Brian wished he had seen her some time before now. He wished they had never lost contact after high school and he knew he should have looked for her on the Internet.

He thought back to that night in 1997, trying to remember when he had felt like that since.

* * *

><p>August 12, 1997

It had taken eighteen months for it to happen and Brian was grateful that it finally had.

Angela Chase was lying down next to him on the Chase's roof, both curled up under a wool blanket that Brian had brought from the Krakow's living room. It felt strangely dreamlike to Brian, to be lying next to Angela on her roof staring at the stars and being on a first name basis again.

"Brian?" asked Angela, lying on her side. "What do you want out of your life?"

"What do you mean?" Asked Brian.

"You know what I mean." she said, rolling her eyes but smiling.

"I want to design computer software."

"What else?"

"I guess I want to live in a city with lots of technology, somewhere like New York or Silicon Valley. Settle down and start a family. What do you want?"

"I want to write poetry. I don't care where I live, as long as it isn't here."

Brian moved slightly closer to her. "Why don't you want to stay in Liberty?"

"Everything's changing and it doesn't feel like home anymore. It's why I'm going to DC with Sharon and Rayanne. Since Sharon and I already got accepted in George Washington and Rayanne has a job waiting for her there, it makes sense."

"Would you ever get married and have a family?"

"Yeah, I would. It sounds so stupid but it's what I've always wanted."

Brian looked into her eyes. "If it's what you want, then it isn't stupid, Angela."

Angela moved closer to Brian and put her hand on his shoulder. "You've always been there for me."

"Of course I would, I'm your friend."

"No, I mean even when I only called you by your last name and made you do my science project, and rode off with Jordan, you never left me."

"I've hurt you before. I spread the rumor about you and Jordan, I said hurtful things behind your back. I was an idiot."

"Then I was an idiot, too."

Brian wished the moment could last forever as Angela embraced him and rested her head on his shoulder. With Angela, time felt like it had stopped.

* * *

><p>Present Day

Unfortunately, time went on. The next morning, Brian left for Arizona to go set up his dorm room and take care of some paperwork, promising Angela he would be back to see her off before she left for D.C. on August 25.

But when Brian came back three days later, Angela was gone. He walked to the Chase's home and Danielle confirmed what he had suspected. Angela was already gone. He cursed himself for getting the day wrong, even when he himself left for Arizona on August 26.

He tried to reach her in DC as soon as he could. He called her school, but they refused to give her information to a random person.

He scoured national phone books and considered going to DC himself when he finally admitted defeat.

_That was the most idiotic thing I've ever done in my entire life.
_He thought to himself.

In 2003, Brian had finally earned both his masters degrees and was offered a position at Google. He took it and that same year, met a woman named Leah Wilkes.

_And getting involved with Leah comes in second place _he thought bitterly.

He proposed two years later and Brian thought he had moved on from Angela.

When their daughter Willow was born nine years later, Brian thought he had made the right choice.

Until the divorce. Leah left him when their daughter was five months old, taking their apartment, their car, and half of everything he owned.

And then she took sole custody of Willow.

The memory made Brian feel uncharacteristically violent. He ripped the covers off himself and kicked them to the floor. He grabbed a small liquor bottle from the mini bar and drank it in seconds.

He threw the bottle in the trash and his hands were on his head in a state of distress.

This would've continued had he not heard a knock on the door.

"Be right there." He muttered and he opened the door to see Sharon Cherski outside his hotel room.

"Hi, Brian!" She chirped "Rick and Danielle's wedding shower is five minutes and Angela told me you weren't answering your phone and she asked me to check on you."

"Why didn't she come?" Brian asked grumpily.

She's dealing with something at the moment. There's something wrong with her son."

"Let me change shirts and I'll come with you. Business Center's on the 12th floor, right?"

"Yeah."

Brian closed his door and pulled a blue button up out of the drawer, put it on, and then walked away with Sharon.

End
file.